

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Kuhns for indicating allowability of Claims 5, 11 and 14 if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the application, as amended, in view of the following remarks.

It is an object of the present invention to provide blow-moldings which are light-weight and have high strength per weight, good rigidity, good heat resistance, good sound absorption, good heat insulation and good sound insulation which are produced at low costs and which are useful for parts of inlets of internal-combustion engines.

Accordingly, the present invention as set forth in **amended Claim 7** relates to a blow molding of a thermoplastic resin, comprising:

from 15 to 70% by weight of inorganic fibers having a mean fiber length of from 1 to 20 mm;

wherein said blow molding has a porosity of from 10 to 90%;

wherein said blow molding defines a wall surrounding a hollow space.

In contrast, Masui et al fail to disclose or suggest a blow molding as claimed which defines a wall surrounding a hollow space. Masui et al disclose a plastic article of fiber-containing resin which is obtained by pre-heating a thermoplastic resin sheet to obtain an expanded sheet and then shaping the expanded sheet between two molds (Masui et al, Example 1 at col. 16-17). Thus, the article of Masui et al does not have a wall surrounding a hollow space. In fact, the articles shown in Figures 18-20 have merely deep indentations and their walls do not define a hollow space. In addition, there is no suggestion or motivation in Masui et al to use blow-molding to form an article. Generally, the type of articles obtained by

blow molding are different from the articles of Masui et al. This is further evidenced by pages 306 and 307 of Kirk-Othmer attached herewith, which discuss the process of blow-molding and the resulting articles, such as bottles.

Therefore, the rejection of Claims 7-9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as obvious over Masui et al. is believed to be unsustainable as the present invention is neither anticipated nor obvious and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Rhodes is respectfully traversed.

Amended Claim 1 relates to a blow-molding method for fiber-containing thermoplastic resins, comprising:

holding a parison comprising an inorganic fiber-containing, melt-expandable thermoplastic resin, between a pair of facing splits of a mold;

blowing said parison to shape it; and

thereafter reducing a gaseous pressure inside said parison, to thereby again expand said inorganic fiber-containing, melt-expandable thermoplastic resin, to obtain a blow-molding.

In contrast, Rhodes fails to disclose or suggest reducing a gaseous pressure inside said parison as claimed. The specification of the present invention describes the function of the pressure reduction at page 10, last paragraph, and at page 11, 2nd paragraph, as follows:

“In general, when the inorganic fiber-containing thermoplastic resin is extruded out to be a parison, it begins to expand, but the pores existing therein will be often crushed away by the pressure of the blowing vapor applied to the parison. In that case, the resin layer of the final blow molding from the parison must be again expanded so as to form pores therein. The above-mentioned operation for pressure reduction is for again expanding the resin layer of the blow molding.”

“In general, the melt-expandable resin layer of the blow molding will expand in the direction inside the mold when the pressure thereto is reduced. As a result, its thickness increases, and pores are formed in the thus-expanded resin layer, and the apparent density of the resin layer decreases. “

Rhodes is directed only to a general-type blow-molding process, where a parison of fiber-reinforced resin is blow-molded in a die (Rhodes, col. 3, lines 27-34, Claim 1). There is no disclosure or suggestion to reduce the gaseous pressure inside the parison after the blowing and shaping. However, as if there is no pressure reduction, it is likely that the blow molded article is inferior because the pores were crushed away by the blow molding pressure.

Therefore, the rejection of Claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 13 and 15 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Rhodes is believed to be unsustainable as the present invention is neither anticipated nor obvious and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

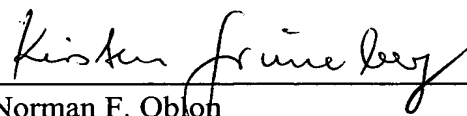
In addition, the rejection of Claims 2, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ertle et al is respectfully traversed.

Claims 2, 10 and 12 now depend directly or indirectly on Claim 1. Since Claim 1 was not rejected over Ertle et al, these dependent Claims should not be rejected over this reference. Therefore, the rejection of Claims 2, 10 and 12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ertle et al is believed to be unsustainable and should be withdrawn.

Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance and early notice of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Marked-Up Copy
Serial No: **09/763,862**
Amendment Filed on: **HEREWITH**

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the Claims as follows.

--1. (Twice Amended) A blow-molding method for fiber-containing thermoplastic resins, comprising:

holding a parison comprising an inorganic fiber-containing, melt-expandable [an] thermoplastic resin, between a pair of facing splits of a mold;

blowing said parison to shape it; and

thereafter reducing a gaseous pressure inside said parison, to thereby again expand said inorganic fiber-containing, melt-expandable thermoplastic resin, to obtain a blow-molding.

7. (Twice Amended) A blow molding of a thermoplastic resin, comprising:
from 15 to 70% by weight of inorganic fibers having a mean fiber length of from 1 to 20 mm;

wherein said blow molding has a porosity of from 10 to 90%;

wherein said blow molding defines a wall surrounding a hollow space.--



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Docket No.: 202344US0X PCT

COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA 22313

RE: Application Serial No.: 09/763,862
Applicants: Tomoyuki OBARA
Filing Date: February 28, 2001
For: BLOW MOLDING METHOD AND BLOW MOLDED
PRODUCT
Group Art Unit: 1732
Examiner: A. KUHNS

SIR:

Attached hereto for filing are the following papers:

SUPPLEMENTAL AMENDMENT AND REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION
W/MARKED-UP COPY & ATTACHMENT

Our check in the amount of ~~-\$0-~~ is attached covering any required fees. In the event any variance exists between the amount enclosed and the Patent Office charges for filing the above-noted documents, including any fees required under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for any necessary Extension of Time to make the filing of the attached documents timely, please charge or credit the difference to our Deposit Account No. 15-0030. Further, if these papers are not considered timely filed, then a petition is hereby made under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 for the necessary extension of time. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.

Respectfully submitted,

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MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

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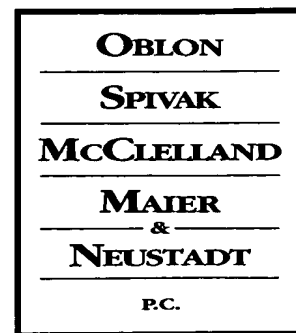
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